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## NOTES ON CURRENT AND RECENT EVENTS.

**Proposed Changes in the Criminal Code of France.**—The most important of some changes in the criminal code of France, recently suggested by M. Julien Goujon, would make it the duty of the clerk of the court of assizes to keep a complete record of the entire testimony of all witnesses subpoenaed by both parties, when they appear for the first time before that court. The preamble of this proposition suggests further changes that contemplate important alterations in the president's examination. Within recent years this has, in most cases, come to assume the proportions of a real charge to the jury, whereas it should be nothing more than an impartial exposition of the case. Another proposal seeks to require the jury to accompany its verdict, in certain cases, with an enumeration of the precise points on which the decision is based, together with the testimony and evidence which led to the decision.<sup>1</sup>

**Proposed Reforms in French Criminal Procedure.**—The extra-parliamentary commission, established by the minister of justice, Berthon, has recently submitted to the French Parliament two proposed reforms in criminal procedure. The first proposes to regulate the provisional discharge of an accused person brought before the court of assizes. Until his appearance before that court, the commission suggests that the court of indictment shall have power to accord to him the benefits of provisional freedom. Moreover, after the accused has appeared before the court of assizes, he may still demand provisional liberty from the court of indictment provided the case is not definitely settled.

The second proposal intends to modify the procedure before the court of assizes. It does away with the act of indictment and replaces it by a revival of the oral statement of the representative of the public ministry. The purpose of this statement is to give the jury a general summary of the case, in order that they may follow more intelligently the testimony of the witnesses. The examination by the president is also eliminated and the court proceeds at once to an examination of the witnesses. Both parties are given the right to question the witnesses directly; that is, without appealing to the president and running the risk of his refusing to allow the question. The president, judges, and jurymen may likewise demand of a witness whatever information they may deem necessary.<sup>1</sup>

**Establishment of the Criminological Institute of St. Petersburg.**—On January 24, 1908, the new Criminological Institute of St. Petersburg was opened for the study of criminology and the allied sciences. It is the only private institution of the kind in the world and its establishment was due mainly to the efforts of Professor W. M. Bechterew, the eminent Russian psycho-neurologist. The commission of specialists who worked out the plan of the Institute agreed upon the following fundamental principles:

The first work of the Criminological Institute as a special institution of learn-

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<sup>1</sup>Furnished by Mr. C. O. Gardner.